

THE

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SHEKEL



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No. 6

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2003



ILAN RAMON
1954 - 2003

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VOLUME XXXVI NO.6 (CONS. #193)

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2003

EDWARD SCHUMAN, EDITOR

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The American Israel Numismatic Association (A.I.N.A.) is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. A.I.N.A. is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a not for profit association under the laws of The State of New York. A.I.N.A.'s primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby. The Association supports a web page <http://amerisrael.com> in which full information about the organization and a sampling of past articles from the SHEKEL are shown. The Association attends national and regional conventions, sponsors study tours to Israel, publication of books and catalogs and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. A.I.N.A. supports Young Numismatists programs which encourage and introduce youth to our hobby. Audio-visual and slide programs are available from the A.I.N.A. archives on many Judaica subjects and are available at no cost except for transportation charges. Local Israel Numismatic Society chapters exist in several areas. Please write for further information.

The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It has been referred to as a Jewish Reader's Digest. The SHEKEL is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership. You are invited to submit an article for publication.

Annual Membership fees:

U.S., Canada and Mexico \$18. - Foreign \$25.- Life \$300.

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President's Message

by Mel Wacks

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It was my pleasure to again design the obverse of the 2004 AINA membership token. It features an ancient bronze coin issued by Simon Bar Kochba, the leader of the ill-fated Second Revolt (132-135 CE). The name SIMON appears in ancient Hebrew around a 7-branched palm tree.

Paul Romanoff wrote in "Jewish Symbols on Ancient Jewish Coins": "(The palm tree) represented Judea the productive, Judea the blessed, and the palm motif figured prominently on the walls, doors and pillars of the Tabernacle and the Temple. The palm tree has a double meaning, the symbol of Judea and the symbol of abundance and plenty." The token's reverse pictures the AINA logo, designed by Nathan Sobel, surrounded by a flag motif created by Alex Shagin.

This is the third issue in the series of ancient coins depicted on AINA tokens. If you missed out on the 2002 token featuring the Shekel of the First Revolt, or the 2003 token depicting the Temple menorah on a coin of Mattathias Antigonus, you can order these from AINA, while limited supplies last, for \$5 each.

We have three new board members up for the 2004 election: Marc Randolph, AINA's Legal Consultant; Sagi Salomon, President of the Israel Numismatic Society/Coin Club of Los Angeles; and Josh Prottas, collector and exhibit judge for the ANA. Any member of AINA can enter the race by submitting his or her name within 30 days, along with nominating signatures of 5 members in good standing of AINA.

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy 2004,

The Editor's Page

By Edward Schuman



It seems like only yesterday that we prepared issue No.1 of the SHEKEL and now already we are at issue No. 6, the last of Volume XXXVI year 2003. The volume number for 2004 will be XXXVII but along with the 37th year comes attrition. A.I.N.A. has lost more than a dozen of its oldest members this year, a greater number than any previous year. This situation can not get better. Membership is the key to existence. Won't you introduce a friend or relative to A.I.N.A.? Our magazine is loaded with Jewish history with a numismatic undertone and can be of interest to anyone.

Israel is in dire need of help and we need not write of their problems. In order to save them the expenses of separate mailings for their new offerings, whenever possible we will include them with the SHEKEL mailings. If your magazine is delayed a week or so, this is the reason.

Florence will shortly be sending out the dues notices. Please do not stick the notice in a drawer and forget about it. Reminder letters are both costly and time consuming to send out. A.I.N.A. operates on a very tight budget. There is always plenty of work to be done and we are all volunteers. All we ask is that you send your dues back promptly. It makes our tasks that much easier.

A.I.N.A. will have an exhibit table at the F.U.N. convention in Orlando, FL January 7th-10th 2004. The show will be at the Orange County Convention Center on University Drive and admission is free. This is the first coin convention of the new year and rivals the A.N.A. in scope and size. If you will be in the area at that time, please drop by and chat. Many dealers who advertise in the SHEKEL will have bourse tables there and you will find loads of items for sale.

Florence and I want to wish all of our members a Very Happy and Healthy New Year.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to Edward Schuman, the Editor.

THE SHOAH'S GREATEST HERO

Among the 'Righteous Gentiles' were a handful of diplomats from a number of countries who secretly issued visas to Jews and other Europeans threatened with deportation to the Nazi death camps. These diplomats risked not only their professional careers but also their lives.

Twenty-two years ago Raoul Wallenberg became an honorary citizen of the United States. The honor though, was truly ours. This extraordinary man helped save tens of thousands of lives while working under the direction of the American government. Yet, the full truth about Wallenberg's own fate remains unknown. The international community, and most especially the American government, must redouble their efforts to establish the facts of what happened to him. Additional pressure must be brought to bear against Russia to open all archives related to his case, even if it means unleashing embarrassing secrets of the Soviet era --or more recent secrets, and not just Russian ones.

Anyone who knows Wallenberg's story is aware that humanity owes this man a huge debt. So many others were less courageous or even complicit in the evil of their time. He chose to risk his privileged life in order to help friends and strangers alike.

The scion of a prominent Swedish family, Wallenberg was sought out by the U.S. War Refugee Board in Stockholm for a dangerous task to rescue thousands of Hungarian Jews. At age 32 he was appointed secretary of the Swedish legation in Hungary, which received financial help from the United States and guidance from the War Refugee Board under the supervision of the American Secretary of State.

The Nazis had already deported more than 400,000 Hungarian Jewish men, women and children to the camps. Only about 230,000 Jews were left in Budapest. Wallenberg set out at once to save them through courage, ingenuity, diligence and bluff. He devised creative and effective solutions, such as protective Swedish passes bearing official signatures and safe houses flying the Swedish flag, and he employed traditional techniques in use at the time, including threats and bribes. Wallenberg spared tens of thousands of people from deportation and death marches while the Nazi power was at its peak, and many more from an all-out massacre as the desperate Germans withdrew toward the war's end.

Soviet military authorities arrested Wallenberg in January 1945, in violation of international law. Three months later, American Secretary of State Edward Stettinus instructed the American ambassador in Moscow, Averell Harriman, to offer help on Wallenberg's behalf to Sweden's ambassador, who reportedly rebuffed the offer. This response was enough to

signal to the United States that little could be done to help Wallenberg, even though it was known at the highest level of the State Department that his life could be in danger.

Members of Congress continued to press Wallenberg's case. In 1947, the prominent chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Arthur Vandenberg, appealed directly to Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson to intervene, but Acheson refused. The State Department's official position appears to have remained unchanged for decades. In 1973, 28 years after Wallenberg was taken into Russian custody, his ailing mother wrote to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger pleading with him to seek information about her son from the Kremlin. The State Department's European Bureau strongly supported her request, but for reasons that have never been adequately explained, Kissinger did not.

Meanwhile, congressional efforts to shine a spotlight on Wallenberg's situation continued sporadically. In 1981, a bill was introduced to grant Wallenberg honorary American citizenship. At the time, only one other person had been made an honorary American citizen, Sir Winston Churchill. The legislation sped through Congress, and President Reagan signed it into law in the Rose Garden that fall.

We know next to nothing about the Shoah's greatest hero, about the ultimate fate of perhaps the greatest hero of the Holocaust era. Only two years ago, Sweden's prime minister announced that "it cannot be said" that Wallenberg "is dead." Indeed, with the release of a detailed Swedish Foreign Office study, Prime Minister Goran Persson concluded "there is no evidence of what happened" to Wallenberg. The report noted that the Swedish government had failed to take opportunities, particularly in the latter half of the 1940s, to obtain Wallenberg's release.

And in March of this year, a top level Swedish investigatory body the Eliasson Commission, added little to the prime minister's remarks but was even sharper in chastising the Swedish Foreign Ministry for its initial "palpable lack of interest" in the Wallenberg case. Also criticized was the American failure at the beginning to assure "a high degree of responsibility" in providing for Wallenberg's security.

The Kremlin may insist today that Wallenberg was executed at the Lubyanka prison in July 1947 but it has offered no real proof, or documentation and no evidence to validate that claim. As early as the fall of 1991, Russia's top archivist bitterly and publicly complained that the KGB had deliberately classified various documents of the Wallenberg case as "operational intelligence ascertaining "the entire truth."

October 5 not only marks the anniversary of the law making Wallenberg an honorary American citizen, it also happens to be the date

that the cornerstone of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum was laid at 100 Wallenberg Place in Washington.

Many honors have been given, and will continue to be given, to preserve the memory of Wallenberg's achievements. He will soon be made an honorary citizen of Budapest. Such honors are helpful in educating the world about Wallenberg's selfless and courageous work. But that is not enough. The United States must pressure Russia to open all of its Wallenberg archives so the fate of this remarkable honorary citizen, who worked closely with this country in a time of international crisis but was evidently left stranded when he needed help most, can finally be learned.

The Raoul Wallenberg medal is the first in the "Visas for Life" Series commemorating Righteous Gentile Diplomats. The obverse shows a full faced portrait of Raoul Wallenberg with his name in English and Hebrew and the word Sweden in English. The reverse side shows the signature of Wallenberg in the center. The official seal of the Swedish embassy in Budapest that was mounted on the doors of the safe houses in the city is below. The legend in Hebrew and English - Visas for Life - Budapest-1944-45. This official award medal commemorating Raoul Wallenberg expresses the gratitude of the thousands of Jews whose lives he saved.



The First Israeli Astronaut

Ilan Ramon was born June 20, 1954, in Tel Aviv, Israel. He graduated from High School in 1972, and received a bachelor of science degree in 1972, and He a bachelor of science degree in electronics and computer engineering from Tel-Aviv University in 1987. In 1974, Ramon graduated as a fighter pilot from the Israel Air Force (IAF) Flight School.

From 1974-1976, he participated in A-4 Basic Training and Operations. The years 1976-1980 were spent in Mirage III-C training and operations. In 1980, as one of the Israel Air Force's establishment team of the first F-16 Squadron in Israel, he attended the F-16 Training Course at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. From 1981 to 1983, he served as the Deputy Squadron Commander B, F-16 Squadron. From 1983 to 1987, he attended Tel Aviv University. He served as Deputy Squadron Commander A, F-4 Phantom Squadron from 1988 to 1990. During 1990, he attended the Squadron Commanders Course. From 1990-1992, he served as Squadron Commander F-16 Squadron. During 1992-1994, he was Head of the Aircraft Branch in the Operations Requirement Department.

In 1994, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel and assigned as Head of the Department of Operational Requirement for Weapon Development and Acquisition. He stayed at this post until 1998. Colonel Ramon has accumulated over 3,000 flight hours on the A-4, Mirage III-C, and F-4, and over 1,000 flight hours on the F-16 fighters. Ramon served in the Yom Kippur War and Operation Peace for Galilee. He was reported also to be one of the lead pilots involved in the raid which destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak in 1981.

In 1997, Colonel Ramon was selected by NASA to serve as a Payload Specialist on the Space Shuttle Columbia. In July 1998, he reported for training at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. He left the Space Center in Florida on January 16, 2003, for a 16-day mission. During the mission, Ramon conducted a number of experiments and the flight was considered a great success.

"Being the first Israeli astronaut --I feel I am representing all Jews and all Israelis," Ramon said. Referring to his mother and grandmother, They both survived imprisonment in Auschwitz, he added, "I'm the son of a Holocaust survivor. I carry on the suffering of the Holocaust generation, and I'm kind of proof that despite all the horror they went through, we're going forward."

Although Ramon described himself as a secular Jew, special kosher meals were made for his journey and he consulted with rabbis before leaving about the proper way to observe Shabbat from space. Ramon carried several personal souvenirs with him into space. His wife gave him four poems and his father gave him photographs of the family.

His 15-year-old son, Assaf, and Ramon's brother, Gadi, both gave him letters to be unsealed and read only after he was in orbit. Israel's president, Moshe Katsav, gave him a credit card microfiche copy of the Bible. He also took a pencil drawing titled "Moon Landscape" drawn by a 14-year-old Jewish boy, Peter Ginz, who was killed at Auschwitz.

Ramon's journey into space occurred as Israelis continued to suffer through a horrendous period of violence and his selection as the first Israeli astronaut helped lift the nation's spirits. Ramon was a national hero and symbol of hope. Ramon was a hero in his homeland on a scale that some said was difficult to translate into American understanding.

Tragically, just minutes before landing on February 1st, the Columbia exploded. Ramon and six American astronauts aboard were killed. Ramon leaves behind a wife, Rona, and four children.

Ilan Ramon is honored by the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation with medal commemorating him as Israel's first astronaut. The reverse of the medal contains the names of all the astronauts who perished in the tragedy. The legend "*they were swifter than eagles*" comes from 2 Samuel.1:23



The Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem Medal

Rabbi Johanan Ben-Zakai was the most important tanna in the last decade of the Second Temple, and, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the founder and first president of the rabbinical academy at Jabneh. According to the theory formulated in the Mishnah, that traditions were handed down through an unbroken chain of scholars, Johanan, in receiving the teachings of Hillel and Shammai, formed the last link in that chain. But it is rather as a pupil of Hillel than of Shammai that he is known. Before his death Hillel is said to have prophetically designated Johanan, his youngest pupil, as "the father of wisdom" and "the father of coming generations".

Like that of Hillel, Johanan's life was divided into periods of forty years each. In the first of these he followed a mercantile pursuit, in the second he studied, and in the third he taught. Another version has it (Sifre, Deut. 357) that in the last forty years of his life he was a leader of Israel. If the last statement be accepted as approximately correct, and it is assumed that Johanan lived at the latest one decade after the destruction of Jerusalem, his public activity as the recognized leader of the pharisaic scribes must have begun between the years 30 and 40 of the common era.

His school was called the "great house," after the expression in II Kings xxv. 9 (Yer. Meg. 73d). It was the scene of many incidents that formed the subjects of anecdote and legend. Johanan expounded and taught "in the shadow of the Temple". There, presumably, he met "the sons of high priests" that is, of high priestly families who had concentrated in their hands communal and political power and were principally authorities in matters pertaining to the Temple and its administration. Many of them had adopted the ways of the Sadducees. Johanan clashed openly with one of them and was able to give practical expression to the Pharisaic view. The Mishnah records a controversy between Johanan and the Sadducees on whether the Holy Scriptures "render the hands unclean" (Yad. 4:6).

The other accounts of his disputes with them are legendary in character. These accounts were apparently composed when the Sadducees had ceased to exist. By his active opposition to them Johanan undoubtedly contributed to curtailing their influence and to supplanting them in the Temple and in its service.

He was also opposed to the special privileges which the priests had arrogated to themselves, such as exempting themselves from paying the half shekel. Johanan declared against them: "Any priest who does not pay the shekel is guilty of a sin." It was however clear to him that the sages were powerless to impose their views fully on the priests. In his own

special way he succeeded in increasing the number of Pharisaic priests who accepted his decisions and in influencing their ways and the order of the Temple service.

The "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem" official medal honors Rabbi Johanan Ben-Zaki and the four Sephardic Synagogues in the Old City Jerusalem. The four Synagogues are named: the Rabbi Johanan Ben-Zakai, Eliahu Hanavi (Elijah the Prophet), the Istanbul, and the Emtzai (Middle) Synagogue. The most important of the four is the Johanan Ben-Zakaic Synagogue, which, according to tradition was the site where Rabbi Jochanan Ben Zakai's center of learning stood, in the time of the Second Temple.

In 1835 the four synagogues were renovated and combined into a single complex. During the siege of the Old City's Jewish Quarter in the 1948 War of Independence, the building served as a shelter for the residents. When the Quarter fell to the Jordanian forces, the defenders were removed and the synagogues were looted and burned. In the 1967 Six Day War the Old City fell to the Israel Defense Forces. One of the major projects in the devastated Jewish Quarter was the restoration of the four ancient synagogues, precisely according to their original form and special atmosphere.

The front of the medal shows the Holy Ark of the Johanan Ben-Zakai synagogue, and a seated figure representing the great Tanna (Teacher of the Mishna). Inscribed around the rim is the phrase "Praise the Lord O Jerusalem", taken from the Book of Psalms, which had become a kind of anthem of the old-time Jerusalemites. On the reverse side appear decorative motifs from the other three synagogues.



Dublin's Jewish Community

The Irish have often been compared to the Jews, in their propensity to wander, their global spread and their ability to assimilate into most societies and rise to the top. Indeed, there is a fanciful notion that the Irish are one of the lost tribes of Israel and that Jeremiah deposited the Ark of the Covenant on a great mound in County Meath and that a corruption of the Jewish word for law, torah, gave this area its name: Tara. In recent years the term Diaspora has been borrowed from the Jews to become a popular piece of short-hand to describe the world-wide Irish population.

Jews have lived in Ireland for centuries. The earliest reference is in the Annals of Innisfallen in the year 1079 which records the arrival of five Jews from over the sea. It is probable that they came as merchants from Rouen in France. There is little doubt that following the expulsion of the Jews from Portugal in 1496 that some arrived on the South coast. The honor of having the first Jewish Mayor in Ireland goes to the town of Youghal in Co. Cork, where a Mr. William Annyas was elected to that position in 1555. Since then Mr. Robert Briscoe was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1956 and 1961, his son Mr. Ben Briscoe was Lord Mayor in 1988, and Mr. Gerald Goldberg was Lord Mayor of Cork in 1977.

The earliest record of a Synagogue in Ireland dates from 1660 with the establishment of a prayer room in Crane Lane, opposite Dublin Castle. The oldest Jewish cemetery dates from the early 1700's. Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, there was some Jewish immigration from Central Europe, but the main influx came between 1880 and 1910 when approximately 2,000 Jews came from Eastern Europe and settled there. They participated fully in all walks of life, in the professions, trades, and manufacturing. Only a handful of Jews came during the Nazi period and shortly after the end of World War II.

The Jewish population peaked at approx. 5,500 in the late 1940's. The numbers have now declined to approximately 2000. Today, the community in Dublin boasts three Orthodox and one Progressive Synagogue, a Mikveh, Jewish school, Talmud Torah, Museum and Kosher butcher. There are also a number of active Youth and Zionist organizations. The Irish Jewish community is lively, vibrant and optimistic for the future.

The illustrated token was used to gain entrance to the mikveh.



Jewish Paper Money in Russia KHARKOV

The Russian city of Kharkov lay outside the Pale of Settlement. Jewish merchants often attended the large fairs held there from the second half of the 18th century, however, and individual Jews even settled there without hindrance. In 1821 the authorities forbade Jews to enter the town, but, on the complaint of the local authorities that the order was harmful to the business of the fairs, Jewish merchants were again admitted in 1835.

From 1859 Jews who were allowed to live outside the Pale of Settlement began to settle in Kharkov. In 1868 they were permitted to build a synagogue and nominate a community council. There were then 35 families of merchants and craftsmen. In that period there were 26 Jewish pupils studying at the local secondary school and university and 68 Jewish soldiers. When the fairs were held, some 3,000 Jews would visit the town.

Toward the end of the 19th century, many Jewish youths from the provinces of the Pale began to attend the University of Kharkov, and in 1886 the 414 Jewish students formed 28.3% of the student body. During World War I and the Civil War (1918–20) many Jews, expelled from their places of residence or escaping from the fighting zone or pogroms, took refuge in Kharkov. The pedagogic seminary of Grodno and its teachers and pupils were transferred to Kharkov in this period and Kharkov became an important Jewish center.

Due to the shortage of viable currency due to World War I and the Russian civil war, the Kharkov Jewish Society of Consumers issued banknotes. The notes were printed with Russian text on the left half and Yiddish on the right half. They were acceptable in all institutes of the Society in exchange for goods or money. The denominations are 50 kopek, 1, 3 and 5 ruble. A second series was issued in Hebrew and Russian. All of these "Russian Jewish notes" are scarce and expensive.

A Hebrew secondary school and popular Jewish university were established, and books and newspapers in Yiddish and Hebrew were published there. The consolidation of the Soviet regime marked the end of organized Jewish life, but the choice of Kharkov as capital of Ukraine from 1919 to 1934 and its general development resulted in a rapid increase in the Jewish population, which numbered 115,811 in 1935, and approximately 150,000 in 1939. The town was the center of the Yevseksiya's activities in Ukraine. Several Yiddish Communist newspapers, including the daily, *Der Shtern* (1925–41), were published.

When the Germans occupied Kharkov at the end of 1941, the Jews still present were massacred at the site known as Drobitzky Yar, about 5

miles from Kharkov. After the liberation of Kharkov by the Soviet army, two mass graves, containing over 15,000 bodies, were discovered on this spot. Jewish settlement was renewed in Kharkov after the war, and the Jewish population was estimated at about 80,000 in 1970.

The last synagogue was closed down by the authorities in 1948–49. All subsequent attempts to obtain permission to organize a synagogue were unsuccessful, and the former synagogue was converted into a sports gymnasium. In 1957, 1958, and 1959 private prayer groups were dispersed on the High Holidays. Several Torah scrolls were confiscated. In 1960 the minyanim were again dispersed and Jews were arrested for baking mazzot. In 1970 Jews had their own section in the general cemetery. Since the days of enlightenment in Russia, Israel has benefited from the large Russian Jewish immigration, including the Jews of Kharkov.





K-13



Jewish Life in Paris during the 12th Century

Of the Capetian kings, Louis VI (1108-37) and Louis VII (1137-80) were favorably disposed toward the Jews. Under their rule the Jewish community in Paris largely increased. Many Jews dwelt also in the environs of the city and owned real estate there. In Paris itself they occupied Les Champeaux, a quarter consisting of a certain number of dark and narrow streets closed by gates at each end. Within this district were to be found the potters, the shoemakers, and the dealers in old clothes and rags.

At that time there were two synagogues there; one in the Rue de la Juiverie, the other in the Rue de la Tacherie, formerly called also Rue de la Juiverie. The community owned two cemeteries, one situated in the Rue de la Galande, the other toward the end of the Rue de la Harpe. Near-by, but on the opposite bank of the Seine, stood a mill which also belonged to the Jews.

But their thrift and their wealth excited hatred and jealousy. All sorts of accusations were brought against them. They were charged with having arrested many Christians for debt, and of having accepted as pledges the sacred vessels used in church service. When, with much solemnity, Pope Innocent II. entered Paris, in 1139, the representatives of the Jewish community were permitted to present themselves with those of the city corporations. Wishing to honor the pope, the Jews, carrying the scrolls of the Law, greeted him with an address, to which he replied: "May the Lord God Almighty tear away the veil that conceals your hearts!"

Philip Augustus (1180-1223), who succeeded Louis VII., displayed a hostile spirit toward the Jews, and had scarcely ascended the throne when, on a certain Sabbath-day in 1180, he ordered the imprisonment of all the Jews in his kingdom, their release being conditioned on the payment of the sum of 15,000 silver marks. In the spring of 1181 he banished them all, confiscated their lands and dwellings, and annulled four-fifths of their claims against the Christians, exacting the remainder for himself.

The synagogues were turned into churches, that situated on the Rue de la Juiverie, within the city limits, Philip presented to Maurice, the Archbishop of Paris, in 1183, and it became the Church of Sainte-Madeleine-en-la-Cité. To the cloth-makers' guild the king leased twenty-four Jewish houses which were situated in the "Judearia Pannificorum" or ghetto, now the Rue de la Vieille Draperie, for the yearly payment of a tax of 100 livres.

In 1198 Philip, being hard pressed for money, permitted the Jews to return to France. They flocked back to Paris, where they repaired their

synagogue in the Rue de la Tacherie, and established another in an old tower on the ramparts, La Tour du Pot-au-Diable, near the convent of St.-Jean-en-Grève. They settled near the Church of Petit-St.-Antoine, in the cul-de-sac or blind alley of St.-Faron, in the Rue de la Tissanderie, known later as the "Cul-de-sac des Juifs," in the vicinity of Mont Ste.-Geneviève, in the Rue de Judas, in the Rue Quincampoix, and in the Rue des Lombards, then inhabited by Italian usurers and therefore the financial center of Paris.

From this time the Jews enjoyed a certain degree of liberty and toleration. Some of them were compelled to pledge themselves not to leave the kingdom for a term of years. A bond given about the year 1204 by several Jews as a security for their continued residence contains the names of these Jews, the amount paid annually into the royal treasury, and the oath taken on the "roole" or scroll of the Law. One of these Jews, in a document dated 1209, is called *le Juif du roi*, or the king's Jew.

The illustration is of a replica of the seal of the Jews of Paris. It is copied from a well-known document stored in the National Archives attesting to the renunciation of a mortgage by two Jews: Mathatias and Elie de Bray. The seal was brought to your editor's attention by Robert Leonard at the A.N.A. convention in Baltimore who later presented it to me as a gift.

The seal is composed of an eagle, a traditional symbol of the Jewish community with the fleur de lys in the background representing the royal domain. The Latin inscription *Sicillum Judaeorum Paristorum* is translated as "Seal of the Jews from Paris" (1206). Ironically. The eagle and fleur-de-lis resemble those used on the ancient Yehud coins of the Jews.

Le sceau des Juifs de Paris

est connu par un document conservé aux Archives Nationales, qui est une reconnaissance d'abandon d'hypothèque par deux Juifs : *Mathatias et Elie de Bray*.

Le sceau représente un aigle, symbole traditionnel de la Kehilla sur fond de fleurs de Lys, représentant le domaine royal.

L'inscription latine

"Sicillum Judaeorum Paristorum"

signifie :

Sceau des Juifs de Paris. (1206)



DANIEL ITZIG

Daniel Itzig, whose father was a horse merchant, was born in 1722 in Germany. He became a German banker and rose to be the leader of the Jewish communities of Prussia in the years 1764-99. He was a member of the wealthy banking firm of Itzig, Ephraim & Son, whose financial operations greatly assisted Frederick the Great in his wars. He was also the owner of the large lead-factories at Sorge as well as of the oil-mill at Berlin, being one of the few Jews permitted to engage in such enterprises.

In 1756 Itzig was appointed "Münzjude" (mint-master) by Frederick the Great, and again in 1758, together with his partner Ephraim. In 1797 Itzig became "Hofbankier" (court-banker) under Frederick William II. When the latter came to the throne he instituted a commission to examine into the grievances of the Jews and to suggest measures for their relief. Itzig, with his son-in-law David Friedländer, was appointed general delegate to that body. They had the courage to expose to the conference the cruel legislation of Frederick the Great and to refuse the inadequate reforms proposed.

The Itzigs were among those granted equal rights with Christians. From Frederick William II, whose confidential financier he was, he received, on May 2, 1791, the coveted Naturalisationspatent, bestowing full citizenship on him and his entire family. He was the first Prussian Jew to be so honored. An order was also issued that they should not be classified as Jews in official documents.

Itzig was the first to plan the founding of a home and school for poor Jewish children at Berlin in 1761, a plan which, through the endeavors of David Friedländer and of Itzig's son Isaac Daniel Itzig, was realized in 1778. It established the Juedesche Freischule. The first school of its kind in Germany. Itzig married Miriam, daughter of Simchah Bonem, by whom he had thirteen children. As conversions to Christianity increased, Itzig stipulated in his will that any of his descendants who were converted would be disinherited.

Daniel Itzig died in Berlin on May 21st 1799. He is remembered by a medal engraved by the Jewish artist Abraham Abrahamson which was struck to honor his 70th birthday. The obverse shows a side profile facing right with his name and the Roman Numerals LXX for 70. The reverse side alludes to the Jewish school showing a youth accepting food from a woman.



The Abramson's were a 18th–19th century family of German medalists and engravers. Jacob Abraham, the father was born in Poland, in 1723 and worked in the mints of Berlin, Stettin, Koenigsberg, and Dresden. In 1752, Frederick II of Prussia appointed him medalist at the Berlin mint. Abraham struck 33 commemorative medals, among them one in memory of Moses Mendelssohn.

His son, Abraham, born in 1754 in Potsdam, worked at first with his father but after 1784 on his own. As an engraver he was considered one of the best of his time. Having learned the art of engraving from his father, Jacob Abraham, he soon ex-celled him in artistic execution. He produced a series of medals depicting German scholars. The first medal, of Moses Mendelssohn, which he did with his father, was followed by many others.

He worked as his father's assistant from 1771, but was appointed royal medalist in 1782. Up to the year 1788 Abrahamson had engraved only the designs of others. Aided by a government grant, he made a tour of Vienna, Venice, and Rome from 1788 to 1792 in search of ideas and to study form at the various art centers of Europe. He spent four years abroad, and on his return most of the medals he made were of his own design.

Beside his work for the mint Abraham received government commissions for commemorative medals and wax portraits. He also executed work for Russia and several German states, among them a medal to celebrate Jewish emancipation in Westphalia in 1808. Abraham also did private work, such as medals of Markus Herz (1803), and Daniel Itzig (1793). His signature was Abr, A/S, N, or sometimes just A. In 1792 Abramson was member of the Berlin Akademie der Kuenste and of other similar bodies.

He died in Berlin in July 1811.

Additional Comments on the Tel-Aviv Fair Medals

By Peter S. Horvitz

The 69-millimeter medal for the 1936 fair that was illustrated in your article in the last issue is not the regular bronze issue. It is the very first pattern for that medal that was struck and was then countermarked all over with a 1 to indicate its status as on the obverse and reverse in Hebrew and Latin letters. They appear in different order on the two sides. The photograph of this medal came from Bill Rosenblum's catalog, where he describes it as white metal. Also, this example has a lead plug. Actually this example is struck in silver, which is clear from its appearance and weight.



There also exists a medal for the 1964 fair. It is struck in bronze and measures 59 millimeters. The obverse shows the flying camel in front of symbols of industry, science, and agriculture in an incuse design. The reverse shows a Mercator projection of the world with all roads leading to

Israel over on an incuse design of Tel-Aviv. TEL-AVIV INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR 1964 appears above and below the projection in Hebrew and English. The edge is marked with the usual State of Israel marks. This medal was struck in an edition of 2,540 examples.



In regard to the 1968 medals, it is interesting to note that these medals were not for sale, but were distributed to the exhibitors. This medal is also struck in bronze and measures 45 millimeters. The edge has no marks. One other point of interest concerning the 1936 medal is that it appears to be the only numismatic item issued in Israel during the year 1936. There are no coins with that date, no known tokens, and the Second Maccabiah games were held in 1935, so medals of those games are not from 1936, even though some sources so list them.

The numismatic significance of this is, if I am correct, that this is the only Israel issue of the brief reign of King Edward VIII of England. Israel was, of course, at that time under the British protectorate. Therefore all coins, tokens, and medals issued in Israel at that period are also of interest to collectors of the British Commonwealth. Edward VIII's image, of late, has been rather tarnished by revelations of his possible treasonous behavior just prior to the Second World War. Nevertheless, he is still remembered for his "Woman I love" speech, his romantic surrender of the throne, and his glamorous life style as the Duke of Windsor. And to collectors, souvenirs of his less than a year reign are few and quickly disappearing.

Wherefrom These Motifs?

By Shmuel Aviezer

1) The Lyre on the NIS 1/2 Coin -

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 a special policy has been observed by which the majority of motifs that adorn the circulation coins are derived from those appearing on ancient Jewish coins, in realization of the motto "to renew our days as of old". Yet, this policy did not close the door on the search for other sources of relevance to the history of the Jewish people in the Holyland.

Pursuing this endeavor a unique Hebrew seal was discovered, of an unspecified period, on which a lyre was illustrated. As the noted archeologist Nahman Avigad described it, it is a scarab-like seal, made of brown jasper, with pink spots. Its length is 9.5 mm. and its width is 12 mm. A lyre is excellently engraved therein with two rows in old Hebrew letters underneath.

The lyre is an asymmetrical one, with an acoustic hull and two unequalled arms in length, slanting forward, both joined by an inclined strap. The lyre twelve chords. The acoustic hull is round in one side and angular on the other. It is decorated by a string of pearls from three sides with a pronounced rose ornament in the center.

The inscription: MAADANA BAT HAMELECH, reveals the name of the seal's proprietor: Maadana the daughter of the king. "Maadana" is rather a rare name in the wealth of Hebrew names. A far resounding of such a name maybe echoed in Job 38:31; Maadanot.

The coin depicting this lyre, the NIS 1/2 was first introduced into circulation on September 4, 1985, as is still legal tender in Israel.



NIS 1/2



2) The Lily on the NIS 1.- Coin

The lily appeared for the first time on a Judean Holyland coin at the close of the Persian period and the time of return to Zion from Babylonian exile (6th to 4th century B.C.E.).

The design of such a coin followed the themes of Greek coins: An owl on one side with the letters YHD in ancient Hebrew writing (replacing the Greek letters) and the lily on the other side (instead of the olive branch, the symbol of the goddess Athena). The lily filled the whole surface of the coin.

The lily was mentioned in the description of the capital of columns that stood on the front of the Temple: "... and upon the top of the pillars was lily work ..." (Kings 1,7:22).

Also, we encounter the lily in the Song of Solomon: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys, as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters" (Song of Solomon 2:1-2).

We can trace the lily flower in coins issued by the Hasmonean Alexander Jaunaeus (103-76 BCE) with the legend "Yohonathan the King"; also, coins struck by John Hyrcanus II (63-40 BCE).

Lilies are conspicuous in old Jewish art; and were found engraved on tombstones and in the front of burial caves.

The NIS 1. -coin depicting the lily, alongside the, three letters YHD in old Hebrew writing (representing YAHUD = JEWS) was first put into circulation in Israel with the advent of the New Sheqel currency on September 4, 1985, and is still "going strong".



NIS 1.-



Graven Images on Israeli Coins

By: Shmuel Aviezer

"Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything..." (Exodus 20-4)

Abiding by this command from the Torah, Jewish coins issued throughout the history by Jewish autonomous and independent authorities did not depict any effigies that dominated different domains of life, kings and rulers in particular. Along the 270 years of ancient Jewish rule in the Holyland, i.e. from the year 135 B.C. (when the first Hasmonean coins were issued under the rule of John Hyrcanus) and up to the year 135 A.D. (when the coins marking the last year of the Bar-Kokhba revolt and rule were struck) the coins displayed a variegated show of cultural, religious, botanical and symbolic aspects of life in those times.

Yet, the absence of the portraits of the Jewish rulers at that period, although a bit regretted, has been compensated by the illustration of motifs that represented all walks of life. By this, our knowledge of the social circumstances in which our Jewish ancestors lived has been enriched by the specific topics imprinted on the coins.

With the establishment of the State of Israel, the motto was to "...renew our days as of old" (Lamentations 5:21). This was to be applied also to the coins to be issued. Mr. Kadman, then the chairman of the Israeli Numismatic Society, proposed to the Israeli Government to adapt the motifs appearing on the ancient Jewish coins and imprint them on the coins of the revived Jewish independent entity.

The motifs chosen for the first eight circulation coins were:

- 1) Anchor: Alexander Jannaeus coin (103-76 B.C.E.) -1 pruta (1950)
- 2) Four Stringed lyre: Bar-Kokhba coin (132-135 C.E.) -5 pruta (1950)
- 3) Two-handled amphora: Bar-Kokhba coin -10 pruta (1950) Single-handed jug: Bar-Kokhba coin (second version -10 pruta (1952)
- 4) Cluster of grapes: Bar-Kokhba coin -25 pruta (1950)
- 5) Vine leaf: Coin from the war of the Jews against Rome (66-70) 50 pruta (1949)
- 6) Palm tree: Bar Kokhba coin -100 pruta (1949)
- 7) Three palm branches: Coin from the war of the Jews against Rome (66-70 C.E.) -250 pruta (1950)
- 8) Three pomegranates -Coin from the war of the Jews against Rome (66-70 C.E.) -500 pruta (1952)

I In a very rare exception to the rule, King Agrippa I (37-44 CE) dared to strike his own portrait on coins which were intended for those areas under his control where the majority of the population was non-Jewish and those coins therefore displayed more pagan character.

Since then, many Israeli circulation coins have been issued depicting other motifs selected from the wide range of the Jewish ancient coins, the samples of which are kept in the vaults of the Bank of Israel and in museums.

Yet, as Israeli circulation coins portraying personalities have not been issued, many commemorative coins bore the likeness of important persons. The first one followed the Shulhan Arouch do- and-don't instructions: a silhouette portrait in incused form is not forbidden. That is how the gold coins of Theodoer Herzl (1960), Chaim Weizman (1962) and David Ben-Gurion (1974) were minted: a side look submerged in a concave that altogether do not protrude from the surface of the coin. Few years later, the Jabotinsky commemorative coin (1980) and the Baron Edmond de Rothschild coin (1982) were engraved with an en-face look as another Shulhan Arouch directive was interpreted to allow such an impression "if it is on a coin of common knowledge". Still, all was well with commemorative coins.

But the acute problem of depicting effigies on circulation coins arose during the first years of the eighties when the soaring inflation in Israel severely cut down the value of the banknotes in circulation and made it imperative to withdraw lower denominations and replace them by coins. In a sense of economic profitability and in order to evade a mounting wear and tear this surely was a wise step.

But, voices of concern and feeling of loss were heard in the Bank of Israel and by the members of the Public Committee, that plans the issue of banknotes and coins, regarding the fact that replacing such banknotes by coins would eclipse from circulation such personalities as Theodore Herzl (on IS 10.-), David Ben-Gurion (on IS 50.-) and Zee'v Jabotinsky (on IS 100.-).

It was therefore decided to investigate the possibility of issuing a limited quantity of coins, in the withdrawn denominations, apart from the regular ones, that will portray the likeness of those three personalities in such a manner that will not contradict the "graven image" ban.

The "rescue" came in the form of a special commemorative coin issued by the Swiss mint in honor of the centennial birth of Albert Einstein in 1979. There, and supposedly for the first time in coinage, the image of Einstein was drawn by incusing, so that a shining portrait on the coin surface, surrounded by the elevated unpolished level of the imprint, is clearly discernible by tilting the coin. This way, the portrait is not sculpted, not salient, and therefore abiding by the directive of the Torah.

In order to assume final approval, a sample of the Swiss coin was shown to the responsible people in the Chief Rabbinate prior to the minting

and they declared it "Kosher".

Eventually, eight circulation coins bearing the portraits of the personalities adorning the replaced banknotes have been issued. Everyone illustrated the effigy of the persons as they appeared on the banknotes and was minted in the same metal composition as the regular coin in circulation. As only a limited quantity of each coin was struck people tended to collect them from circulation as "collectors items".

The coins issued are:

1) Theodore Herzl (1984) IS 10.-

A shining silhouette of Herzl surrounded by an elevated area formed by the repetition of the word "Herzl" in Hebrew.

2) David Ben-Gurion (1985) IS 50.-

A shining silhouette of Ben-Gurion surrounded by candelabra.

3) Ze'ev Jabotinsky (1985) NIS 100.-

A shining image of Jabotinsky surrounded by an elevated area formed by Stars of David.

4) Edmond de Rothschild (1986) NIS 1/2

An image of Rothschild surrounded by an elevated area formed by the names of 44 settlements that Baron Rothschild established, or assisted in establishing, in the Holyland.

5) Maimonides (Rambam) (1988) NIS 1.-

An image of Maimonides with an elevated plain surrounding.

6) Levi Eshkol (1980) NIS 5.-

An image of Levi Eshkol surrounded by an elevated area of parallel, vertical dense lines.

7) Chaim Weizman (1992) NIS 5.-A likeness of Chaim Weizman bordered by an elevated area formed by pearls.

8) Golda Meir (1995) NIS 10.-A shining image of Golda Meir protruding from the aureate-bordered-bronze center of the coin towards the nickel-bonded-steel ring.

Thus, while not contradicting the directives of the Law, Israel succeeded in issuing a series of very impressive coins, ingenious in innovation and modern in look, commemorating at the same time a host of distinguished personalities of its revived history.



Ze'ev Jabotinsky



David Ben-Gurion



Theodor Herzl



Maimonides (Rambam).



Baron Edmond de Rothschild



Chaim Weizmann:



Levi Eshkol



Golda Meir

The Kingdom of the Khazars

The Khazars were a pagan people of Turkish origin whose life and history are interwoven with the very beginnings of the history of the Jews of Russia. Jews have lived on the shores of the Black and Caspian seas since the first centuries of the common era. At the beginning of the Seventh Century A.D., the Khazars began building an empire that would encompass what is now the modern Ukraine, the southwestern areas of the Russian steppes and Daghestan. The Kingdom of the Khazars was firmly established in most of South Russia long before the foundation of the Russian monarchy by the Varangians in 855.

Historical evidence points to the region of the Ural as the home of the Khazars. Among the classical writers of the Middle Ages they were known as the "Chozars," "Khazirs," "Akatzirs," and "Akatzirs," and in the Russian chronicles as "Khwalisses" and "Ugry Byelye."

In the second half of the sixth century the Khazars moved westward. They established themselves in the territory bounded by the Sea of Azov, the Don and the lower Volga, the Caspian Sea, and the northern Caucasus. The Caucasian Goths (Tetraxites) were subjugated by the Khazars, probably about the seventh century. Early in that century the Kingdom of the Khazars had become powerful enough to enable the chaghan (king) to send the Byzantine emperor Heraclius an army of 40,000 men, by whose aid he conquered the Persians in 626-627. It was probably about this time that the chaghan of the Khazars and his grandees, together with a large number of his heathen people, embraced the Jewish religion.

When King Bulan reigned over the Khazars, God appeared to him in a dream and promised him might and glory. Encouraged by this dream, Bulan went by the road of Darlan to the country of Ardebil, where he gained great victories over the Arabs. The Byzantine emperor and the calif of the Ishmaelites sent to him envoys with presents, and sages to convert him to their respective religions. Bulan invited also wise men of Israel, and proceeded to examine them all. As each of the champions believed his religion to be the best, Bulan separately questioned the Mohammedans and the Christians as to which of the other two religions they considered the better. When both gave preference to that of the Jews, that king perceived that it must be the true religion. He therefor adopted it.

The conversion took place in 740. According to the Arab historian Mas'udi, the Khazar khagan and the nobility embraced Judaism during the reign of Caliph Harun ai-Rashid (786-809), while the Risala of Ibn-Fadhan tells us that the khagan, the viceroy, the prince of Samandar (in Daghestan) and other dignitaries all professed Judaism.

In the mid-9th Century, the apostle St. Cyril was sent from Byzantium to the Khazars. His biographies note his debating with Jewish rabbis at the Khagan's court. Among the Khazar hierarchy, it was Judaism ministries began in the mid-8th Century - that enjoyed the greatest favor.

However, the glory of the Khazars would soon end. Following a series of military disasters that climaxed in 1016 when the Byzantine emperor Basil II sent a fleet supported by a Russian army against the Khazars. Within a little more than a decade, the Khazars were blotted out from the pages of history. The empire would last in part for some 400 years and though the Khazars would play important roles in the region, - today, material evidence of the Khazars is little to none. Their artifacts and their sites destroyed and lost in the sands of time. A number of sites have been excavated, and though details of the archaeological activity in Russia are difficult to obtain (the Russians hold a monopoly on digs in ancient Khazaria), it appears that there have not been any sensational discoveries to date. No royal burial sites have been unearthed—hardly surprising since, according to Ibn Fadlan, the khaqans were buried under a stream—and no inscriptions, public or private.



All known Khazarian coinage is dated in the 830's-840's. One may speculate that this coinage was connected to the creation of the new capital and the rise of their important trading post, Matarka, built on the ruins of ancient Phanagoria in the Taman peninsula. This only confirmed coinage consists of some extremely rare Abbasid-style Dirhams inscribed with the mint name Ard al-Khazar - Land of the Khazars. These are generally found muled with genuine Abbasid dies from earlier times. But while these coins clearly indicate an origin in Khazaria, it is very unlikely that they were official issues. The extremely rare dirham pictured above appeared in a recent Dmitry Markov auction.

The Coin in the Fish's Mouth

By David Hendin

Officials called for the annual Temple contribution at the beginning of the Hebrew month of Adar, preceding Passover, so that by the first day of the Hebrew month of Nissan, with the start of the Temple's year, contributions could be used for the daily offerings. Surplus funds were transferred for use for other Temple needs.

On the fifteenth day of Adar, money-changing tables were set up throughout the country to receive the annual tribute. Talmudic traditions mention various cities in Galilee where lists were gathered and transferred to Jerusalem. After 10 days, on the twenty-fifth of Adar, the money-changers terminated their local collections and continued their operations only in the Jerusalem Temple.

Virtually all Jews, including those who had expressed reservations about the current state of the Temple and its system of sacrifices, also sent their contributions to the Temple. Matthew 17:24-27 tells the story of how Jesus and his disciples were solicited and gave their contribution to the collectors of the Temple tribute:

And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

This story of the coin in the fish's mouth is never further verified beyond this telling—in other words, we don't know if a coin was actually found there. If it was, however, it seems clear from Matthew's report that it was a shekel of Tyre since it was supposed to pay the annual half-shekel Temple tribute for both Jesus and for Peter the fisherman.

American and European dealers have recently offered Tyre shekels (tetradrachms) and half shekels (didrachms) from a large hoard that was apparently discovered relatively recently in the area that made up ancient Phoenicia. I examined a few hundred of the coins and they dated mostly to the early first century B.C.E. The coins were beautifully struck and in

strong condition. The silver of many of them was slightly grainy or uneven, but the weights were strong, with most shekels near 14 grams and most half shekels near 7 grams.

This large group served as a bit of a reminder for me that the shekels and half shekels of Tyre (together with some Seleucid tetradrachms and didrachms often struck in Tyre, Sidon, or Antioch) were certainly the most commonly circulated silver coins in the ancient Holy Land from the first century B.C.E. to the time of the Jewish War Against Rome, which ended in 70 C.E.

It is also known, as discussed above, that during that period, these coins were the *only* coins accepted as payment of the annual tribute to the Jerusalem Temple of one half shekel per Jewish adult male.

Ya'akov Meshorer theorizes that there were two basic issues of Tyrian silver coins. The first issue was struck in Tyre from 126/5 B.C.E. until 19/18 B.C.E. and the second issue was struck in or near Jerusalem, from 18/17 B.C.E. until 79/60 C.E. This is possible, though other numismatists have argued that the second issue, which is cruder in style and manufacture than the first, may not have been minted at Tyre, but was probably minted somewhere other than Jerusalem.

Whether struck in Tyre or farther south, it is clear that the silver coins of ancient Tyre were well known in the ancient world for their weight and quality of silver. The Talmud states that "Silver, whenever mentioned in the Pentateuch, is Tyrian silver." (*Tosephta Kethuboth* 13,20)

Because of this quotation, backed up by the obviously large quantity of the coins originally minted, it is quite clear that many New Testament stories, such as the coin in the fish's mouth mentioned above, the 30 pieces of silver paid to Judas for his betrayal of Jesus, and the large silver coins used to bribe the soldiers who had fled from their watch at the Holy Sepulchre on Easter morning....all involved the shekels and the half shekels of Tyre.

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Tyre shekel dated 96/95 BCE (left) and half shekel dated 90/89 BCE from the group that recently appeared on the market.

Isaak Izraelovich Brodski

Russian bronze medal dedicated to Isaak Brodski (1884-1939), one of the young artists attracted to the neo-realist group that called itself the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia. The primary goal of the group was to depict revolutionary Russia by painting realistic canvases devoted to such topics as Russian workers, soldiers, and political figures.

Front of the medal shows artist's portrait, text in Russian reads: Isaak Izraelovich Brodski, 1884-1939. Medal was designed by Russian sculptor S. Volkov, made in 1987, by the Leningrad Mint and so marked on the medal.



Isaak Izraelovich Brodski, 1884-1939 was born in Sofievka, Ekaterinoslav in the Ukraine in 1884. He studied at the Odessa Drawing School/Art College 1896-1902 and the Imperial Academy of Arts from 1902 to 08. He was active in St.Petersburg/Petrograd/Leningrad. and traveled in Western Europe in 1909-11). Brodski began exhibiting in 1904, specializing in landscapes and portraits before the October 1917 revolution.

Brodski taught at the Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in 1932-39 serving as rector from 1934-39. He was awarded the Order of Lenin in 1934. He was an officially-celebrated first-wave socialist realist painter, exponent of a highly-finished style.

Brodski was a forefather of Socialist Realism, famous for his iconic portrayals of Lenin and his idealized, carefully crafted paintings dedicated to the events of the Civil War and Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. From 1902 to 1908, he studied with the great genre and history painter Ilya Repin at the Imperial Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg. Brodski was known before the Revolution for his observant salon portraits and landscapes, exhibiting from 1904 with the Wanderers and the World of Art.

Throughout his career, he maintained the academy standards he absorbed as a student; thus he was able to reinstate traditional methods and styles of painting at the reformed All-Russian Academy of Arts in Leningrad.

Throughout his career, Brodski openly acknowledged his Jewish heritage, and he was briefly involved in activities of the Jewish renaissance. In 1916, he became a member of the Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in Petrograd, contributing to both the Petrograd Exhibition of Jewish Artists and the Moscow Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture by Jewish Artists in 1917-18. Mentioning incidents of pre-Revolutionary anti-Semitism in his memoirs, he acknowledged the Soviet regime for recognizing him and his work.

Brodski painted numerous sympathetic portraits of Lenin from life and had no difficulty conforming to Bolshevik dictates. Ambitious in scale, composition, and theme, these portraits were regarded as landmarks. Their meticulous execution, based on research, sketches from life, and documentary photographs, a technique labeled ""Brodsky-ism"" by the artist's critics.

During the 1930s he contributed to numerous exhibitions and had several solo shows. In 1932, Brodski was named Honored Arts Worker of the RSFSR. He was named Professor (1932-39) and then - his final accolade - Director (1934-39) of the All-Russian Academy of Arts.

In 1933, Brodsky was invited to join Alexander Gerasimov and Katsman to meet with Stalin and Kliment Voroshilov to discuss the Socialist Realist method. In 1937, he won a gold medal at the exposition Universelle in Paris. In 1949, his apartment was opened as a memorial museum. Brodski died in St Petersburg in 1939.

REUBEN RUBIN

Reuben Rubin was born in Romania in 1893. He studied art in both Romania and in Paris. He came to Palestine for the first time in 1912 and studied one year at the Bezalel academy of arts in Jerusalem. Afterwards he studied in Paris from 1913 to 1914. From 1916 to 1919, Rubin lived in Romania where he gained a considerable reputation as a painter. Alfred Stieglitz arranged a New York exhibition for him in 1920. He returned to Palestine in 1922, and participated in the first art exhibitions in Jerusalem. When again he returned in 1922, he was 29 years old and already famous. His exhibition in New York had brought substantial attention for his art.

In 1923 he published a series of twelve woodcuts on the search for God, entitled *The God Seekers*. On this theme, Rubin said, "I wish only to express the idea of a Supreme Being. I am a seeker of a God who will end the sufferings of humanity." His one man exhibition was opened on the 9th of April the same year at the David Tower Museum and shown later at the Herzl High School in Tel Aviv. The exhibition was accompanied by readings, articles and parties. The art critics praised his works with great enthusiasm. Money was raised for the purchase of his paintings for the national library.

Rubin opened his studio in a tent on the dunes of Tel Aviv. His art soon became the chronicle of the country. The first pictures painted by Rubin in Palestine were as primitive as the country. His colors were the colors of the country, the Mediterranean, the light and the sun. He developed the habit of signing his work by writing his first name with Hebrew script, and his surname with Latin letters. Until World War II, he also designed scenery for Habimah and other Tel Aviv theaters.

In 1932 he inaugurated the Tel Aviv art museum with a set of single exhibitions. Rubin's work expresses his close identification with Erez Israel. This is shown in the almost primitive candor of his early landscapes ("Tel Aviv," 1912), still lifes, portraits, local scenes ("Dancers of Meron," 1926), and in his optimistic representations of landscapes changed by human effort. He painted Tel Aviv in the different stages of the town development, Galilee and the hills with the olive trees, poets and milk salesmen, deserts and flowers, its past and its dreams. Also Biblical topics often emerge in its work. His "Visions of the Bible" and the Prophets are notable.

His house in Caesarea was the scene of an early A.I.N.A. tour visit. Fortunate indeed were those lucky tour members who chose to purchase his art. The outside of his home was decorated with a metal sculpture,

which represents the fight Jacob had with the angel, a symbol of the fight of humans against themselves.

In 1948, briefly after the establishment of state, Ben Gurion asked Rubin to be the first Israeli Ambassador to Romania. "I know myself with Botschafter-Sein" answered Rubin, "I am a painter." Ben Gurion replied "I also do not know what it means to be Prime Minister". Rubin spent one and a half years in Romania, where his diplomatic obligations were fulfilled the whole time. Ben Gurion's choice turned out to be the right one. Rubin succeeded in bringing thousands Romanian Jews to Israel.

Olive blossoms and grape vines, both "born" in Israel, emerge again and again in his pictures. In 1969 he authored his autobiography "My Life - My Art". In 1973 he was commemorated for his artistic achievements with the Israel prize. In 1974, shortly before his death, he signed an agreement with the city Tel Aviv, in which he converted his Tel Aviv home into a museum. In the Rubin museum are housed 45 of his paintings are exhibited. The museum also contains a biographic exhibition, documents and photographs.

The Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp. has reproduced his work in unique form by laminating a full color miniature of his paintings on medals.



ILYA EHRENBURG

Ilya Ehrenburg was born in Kiev, Ukraine, into a middle-class Jewish family in 1891. When he was five his parents moved to Moscow, where his father operated a brewery. In his memoirs, *People, Years, Life* (1960-65), Ehrenburg writes that he was pampered in his childhood and it was a mere chance that he did not become a juvenile delinquent. He attended the First Moscow gymnasium, but he was arrested in his early teens for revolutionary activities and excluded from the 6th Grade.

Ehrenburg was imprisoned for five months. After release he went to Poltava where his uncle lived. In 1908 Ehrenburg immigrated to Paris to avoid trial for revolutionary agitation. He spent much time in Left Bank cafés, met V.I. Lenin, who wanted to hear news from Moscow, and started to write poetry. His first collection of verse appeared in 1910. In France Ehrenburg became friends with such legendary figures as Picasso and Modigliani.

During the first World War Ehrenburg was a war correspondent at the front. His anti-communist poem, 'Prayer for Russia', appeared in 1917. After returning to his home country he worked as a teacher. In 1919 Ehrenburg married his cousin Liubov' Kozintseva and they had one daughter.

In Ehrenburg's *The Stormy Life and Lazar Roitschwantz* (1928) the hero is a Jewish ghetto tailor who escapes from Russian anti-Semitism. His adventures take him through a half a dozen countries and several prisons. Lazar works as a rabbit breeder in Tula, a rabbi in Frankfurt, a police informer for Scotland Yard, a film actor in Berlin, a starving pioneer in Palestine, and a painter in Paris. Ehrenburg satirizes among others the phony artists of the Quartier Latin and the speculators in the Weimar Republic. He also viewed skeptically the era of the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union. *Out of Chaos* (1934) was an apologia for Socialist Realism, and in *Ne perevodya dykhanie* (1935) the writer accepted the official Communist policy in economic and political matters.

From 1925 to 1945 Ehrenburg lived in Paris, working as a foreign editor of Soviet newspapers. At intervals he returned to the USSR. During the Spanish Civil War Ehrenburg wrote for the Soviet newspaper *Izvestia*. In 1941 he returned to Moscow and listened Stalin's radio speech after the Nazis had attacked the Soviet Union. Stalin was nervous, he drank water and called his listeners "brothers, sisters, friends".

Ehrenburg worked as a war correspondent. His ambitious novel, *The Fall of Paris* (1941-42), depicted the decline of capitalist France. Ehrenburg's reputation made him a target of Goebbel's propaganda.

Ehrenburg's connections with the top of the Soviet political hierarchy were exceptionally good and just before Stalin's death rumors spread in Moscow that the writer Ilya Ehrenburg had been chosen to deliver a petition to Stalin begging him to let Russia's Jews emigrate to Siberia. Behind the scenes, Stalin planned to launch another purge and use Jewish doctors and their absurdly invented "crimes" as an alibi.

The title of Ehrenburg's famous novel OTTEPEL (1954-56), referred to the period after Stalin's death and the mild de-Stalinization program of Nikita Khrushchev, who was the secretary general of the Communist Party from 1953 to 1964. The book secured Ehrenburg's place among the reformers, although he was better known for his loyalty to the Stalinist regime. Ehrenburg received the Stalin Prize in 1942 and 1948, and the International Lenin Peace Prize in 1952. In 1946 he visited Canada and the United States, where John Steinbeck said to him, "if you spit in the mouth of a lion, it becomes tame."

When newspapers and magazines stopped printing his writings in 1949, Ehrenburg sent a short letter to Stalin. The ban was lifted, and he continued his travels in different parts of the world. In China he was astonished by the discipline of the people. In Japan he felt that Kipling's famous lines, "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," are not only wrong but dangerous.

Ehrenburg was the Vice President of World Peace Council (1950-67) and a Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR from 1950. He died in Moscow on August 31, 1967. The last years of his life Ehrenburg devoted to his memoirs, *People, Years, Life*, which portrayed a number of famous writers and artists he had known. He also campaigned to have published works by writers who had earlier been politically condemned by the regime.

The illustrated medal issued in 1968 has a portrait of Ehrenburg on the obverse. The reverse shows an open book and notes.



The Jewish Brigade

The Jewish Brigade Group was the only military unit to serve in World War II in the British army—and in fact in all the Allied forces—as an independent, national Jewish military formation. It was made up mainly of Jews from Palestine. The brigade had its own emblem, a gold Magen David on a background of blue-white-blue stripes and bearing the inscription of the initials in Hebrew of the Jewish Brigade Group. It saw service in Egypt, on the north Italian front, and in northwest Europe, in the years 1944–46. How it came into being is another story of obstacles.

In 1940 the Jews of Palestine were permitted to enlist in Jewish companies attached to the East Kent Regiment (the "Buff's"), and 15 such companies came into being. In 1942–43 these companies were formed into three infantry battalions of a newly established "Palestine Regiment". These battalions, whose men had previously served only in Palestine, were moved to Cyrenaica and Egypt, but there, too, as in Palestine, they did not receive full equipment and continued to be engaged primarily in guard duties. The Jewish soldiers stepped up their demands for participation in the fighting and for the right to display the Jewish flag.

Hoping to attract greater support in America for a policy of assistance to Britain, in October 1940, the War Cabinet decided to establish a division, comprised of American and refugee Jews. Palestine would provide the nucleus of the commanders. In October 1941, because the Middle East had become the major theater of war, Winston Churchill was persuaded to cancel the unit, lest it arouse Arab anger.

With the United States entry into the war, the scheme was resurrected but modified. It was now completely based on volunteering in Palestine. The British refused to establish an identifiably Jewish formation at brigade strength that would fight under a Jewish flag.

The establishment of the brigade was the final result of prolonged efforts by the *yishuv* and the Zionist movement to achieve recognized participation and representation of the Jewish people in the war against the Nazis. The British authorities were reluctant to have Jews serving in fully fighting units and confined them to auxiliary corps, while the infantry were largely employed on guard duties in Palestine. These obstacles were overcome only after a sustained and unrelenting campaign, headed by Chaim Weizmann in London and by Moshe Shertok (Sharett), head of the Jewish Agency Political Department, in Jerusalem.

In the summer of 1943, the Zionists revised their proposals. Winston Churchill agreed and, applying all of his personal authority, urged his

colleagues to approve them. On July 3, 1944, the British War Cabinet decided that, although the formation of a Jewish division was not feasible on practical grounds, the creation of a brigade should be immediately and positively examined. On September 20, 1944, an official communique by the War Office announced the formation of the Jewish Brigade Group under Brigadier Ernst Benjamin, and the Zionist flag was officially approved as its standard.

Comprised of three infantry battalions, the brigade sailed from Alexandria to Italy, and took part in the Allied offensive there in April 1945. Fifty seven Jews were killed and two hundred were wounded. The Brigade Group took part in the early stages of the Allies' final offensive in Italy in April 1945 and then was withdrawn for reorganization. It was the first and only Jewish formation to fight in World War II under the Jewish flag, recognized as representing the Jewish people.

After the termination of hostilities the Brigade was stationed at Tavisio, from where it extended aid to Displaced Persons. About 150,000 Jews came to Tavisio to receive aid from the Brigade. In July 1945 the brigade moved to Belgium and the Netherlands, from where it continued its welfare work and organized Beriha stations in Austria and Germany. Other soldiers bought arms for the Hagana, the Jewish underground in Palestine. The British disbanded the brigade in the summer of 1946.

Thirty thousand Jews from Palestine served in the British army between 1939 and 1946. They sustained 700 fatalities; 1,769 were taken prisoner; several thousand were wounded; and 323 were decorated or mentioned in dispatches. Five thousand served in the Jewish Brigade.

A medal was issued in 1969 to honor the 30th Anniversary of the famed Jewish Brigade. This medal was not offered for sale to the general public and is quite scarce and desirable. Obverse: Around the top rim in Hebrew, "The fighting Jewish Brigade", in the center the dates "1939-1969". The square in the center is white enamel, the Star of David in Yellow enamel, with the numeral "2" in the center. Around the bottom rim in Hebrew "2nd Regiment" The reverse pertains to the medal's manufacturer.



THE JEWS OF CONSTANTINE AND ALGERIA

The Algerian town of Constantine was named after Emperor Constantine in 313. Latin inscriptions give evidence of a Jewish colony there whose surroundings seem to have been inhabited by Judaized Berbers. The Arab conquest brought little change to Constantine. The Jews maintained their identity and their "elder" (*zaken*) led his followers to war like an Arab or Berber sheikh.

According to the 15th-century rabbis of Algeria, Constantine was one of the most important Jewish communities in Muslim countries. There were many local scholars in the 15th century. Joseph b. Minir, called Hasid, tomb is venerated by Jews and Muslims to the present day and whose works, now lost, were quoted by Joseph Caro. In the 18th century the community built its quarter. In 1818 the Turks attacked Constantine which they pillaged, massacred, and carried off 17 young Jewish girls whom they brought to their commander. The girls were subsequently released.

The French government had accumulated enormous debts to the Bacri and Busnach families, relatives and partners, who had been delivering grain to France for them since the end of the 18th century. These unpaid debts were the cause of diplomatic incidents that resulted in the French conquest of Algiers in 1830. The French conquest opened a new era for the 30,000 Jews of Algeria. In the beginning the communities were allowed to continue their self-government, and the rabbis continued to administer justice. But this autonomous structure was soon overturned. Rabbinical justice and jurisdiction of the Jews passed to the French tribunals. The *muqaddam*, who had previously headed each Jewish community, was replaced by a deputy mayor. These reforms did not give rise to any protests on the part of the Jewish population, as they retained their previous legal status. However, the changes caused some to European Jews to return to Leghorn, and some middle class, tradesmen, and craftsmen to emigrated to Morocco and Tunisia.

Under the French each municipal council and chamber of commerce had one or two Jewish members. In 1858 a Jewish general counselor was elected for each province. In Algiers, Oran, and Constantine consistories on the model of those of France were created. Chief rabbis, brought from France, were appointed and paid by the government, and presided over all other religious functionaries. One of the tasks of these chief rabbis was to promote the emancipation of their followers. Cultural assimilation was so rapid that it provoked a break with the old Jewish world. French education, Despite its advantages, this led many Jews who were unprepared for it to

leave Judaism. To counteract this trend *talmud torah* schools were opened in many cities. Several highly influential families formed a Jewish intelligentsia, capable of assimilating French civilization yet maintaining their own traditions. Members of these families were the first to enter the liberal professions, becoming magistrates, physicians, lawyers, engineers, high-ranking officers in the Army, and, later, university professors. Both they and the French Jews favored the naturalization of Algerian Jews as did also the French liberals.

Algerian Jews were granted the right of individual naturalization in 1865, and on October 24, 1870. by the Cremmieux Decree, all Algerian Jews were declared French citizens with the exception of those in the south, whose legal situation remained uncertain. The naturalization of some 35,000 Jews resulted in a wave of anti-Semitism. Jews were attacked and pogroms followed. Up to 1900 there were cases of looting and killing, and numerous synagogues being sacked and the Holy Scrolls desecrated and used as banners by the rioters in many towns and villages. The Dreyfus affair in France inflamed the anti-Jewish campaign even more. In Constantine, by decision of the deputy mayor, Jewish patients were not admitted to hospitals.

The heroic participation of the Jews in World War I caused an improvement of relations. The one franc note was issued by the Chambre du Commerce in Constantine as emergency currency during the fiscal shortages which occurred throughout Europe in the aftermath of the war.



The emergence of Nazi Germany and Hitler's rise to power was greeted with rejoicing by the anti-Semites. This led to a new wave of anti-Semitic campaigns throughout Algeria which culminated in a pogrom that progressed into a massacre in Constantine in 1934 in which Jewish property and lives were lost. The crisis was further renewed in 1936, when Leon Blum, a Jew, became premier of France.

Despite the bravery shown by the Jews on the front during World War II, one of the first measures taken after the French defeat in 1940 was to abrogate the Cremieux Decree. The 117,646 Jews of Algeria became the object of daily suffering and were cast outside the pale of society, impoverished, and humiliated.

The Algerian administration applied the racial laws of Vichy with excessive severity. After Jewish children were banned from attending schools and restrictive clauses were applied in institutions of higher learning Jewish schools with private instructors were organized. The expenses of these private schools were met by the communities jointly, although the financial burden was very heavy.

Some time later, the government totally forbade any Jewish higher education and placed the Jewish schools under strict, malevolent supervision without, however, contributing toward their upkeep. Only the rabbis were granted the right to represent the community before the authorities.

There was some improvement in the living conditions of the Jews after the war, but then the nationalistic powers took hold. France soon realized that it could no longer afford its Algerian colony.

During the Algerian F.L.N. (*Front de Liberation Nationale*) terrorist attacks in the late 1950s, grenades were often thrown into the Jewish quarter. In 1962, when Algeria was granted independence, there began a massive exodus of the Jewish community, which then numbered from 15,000–20,000. Most Jews emigrated to France, where they replaced their brethren in many cities who were killed in the Holocaust. But a sizeable number went to Israel. The local *talmud torah* with its 800 students closed down in July of that year. The synagogues were turned into the general headquarters of the F.L.N. By the end of the 1960s only a few Jewish families remained in Constantine.

Rabbi Isaac Elhanan Spektor

Isaac Elhanan Spektor was a Russian rabbi and author, born at Rosh, government of Grodno, in 1817. His father, Israel Issar, who was rabbi of Resh and had a leaning toward hasidism, was his first teacher. Young Isaac Elhanan made remarkable progress in his Talmudical studies, and was soon famous as a prodigy. At the age of thirteen he married, and settled with his wife's parents in Vilkovisk, where he remained for six years. He studied under Benjamin Diskin, rabbi of Vilkovisk, who, much impressed by his agreeable manners and great ability, accepted him as a pupil and granted him his "semikah," or ordination.

The 300 rubles which his wife had brought him as dowry having been lost through the bankruptcy of his debtor, Spektor, being unable to rely any longer on his father-in-law for support, became in 1837 rabbi of the small adjacent town of Sabelin, with a weekly salary of five Polish gulden. He remained there in great poverty for about two years, when he went to Karlin and introduced himself to R. Jacob then considered one of the foremost rabbis of Russia. Jacob was so favorably impressed by the extensive learning and the carefulness of the young man that he recommended him to the first community desiring a rabbi, namely, that of Baresa, where the salary was one ruble a week.

In 1846 Spektor was chosen rabbi of Nishvez, government of Minsk, but the community of Baresa was unwilling to let him go, and he was obliged to leave the town at night. The salary of his new position, four rubles a week, was a munificent one for those days. At first many of the older members of the community objected to so young a rabbi. After he had become known, however, his popularity was such that when he decided to accept the rabbinate of Novohrodok in the government of Kovno the people of the latter town wished to restrain him, and he had to leave it, as he had left Baresa, stealthily at night.

He went to Novohrodok in May, 1851, and remained there until the same month in 1864, when he accepted the rabbinate of Kovno, which he occupied until his death.

Spektor was an indefatigable worker, and in the last forty years of his life, when he was steadily becoming more generally recognized as the foremost rabbinical authority in Russia, he maintained a large correspondence with rabbis, communities, philanthropists, and representative men in many parts of



the world, who sought his advice and instruction on all conceivable subjects relating to Jews and Judaism. He early began to take an interest in general Jewish affairs and his sound reasoning, his liberal views, and his love of peace combined to establish him as one of the great leaders of Russian Jewry. In 1857 he was the youngest member of a committee of rabbis chosen to regulate the management of the yeshibah of Volozhim. In 1868 he stood at the head of a committee to help the poor during a drought which almost produced a famine and he allowed as a temporary measure the use of peas and beans in the Passover of that year. In 1875 he decided against the use of "etrogim" (citrons) from Corfu, because of the exorbitant price to which they had risen.

Twice Spektor visited St. Petersburg to take part in the conferences held there to consider the situation of the Jews after the riots of 1881. During his second visit, in the summer of 1882, Kovno was partly destroyed by fire. Spektor collected in the capital a large sum for those who had been ruined by the conflagration. However he was unsuccessful in his attempt to induce the government to recognize as the real head of the Jewish communities the synagogue rabbi instead of the government rabbi, who was in reality only a civil functionary and a layman.

In 1889 Spektor was elected an honorary member of the Society for the Promotion of Culture Among the Jews of Russia and in the same year he declared himself emphatically opposed to the proposed celebration of his rabbinical jubilee. The illustrated medal was struck to commemorate this event. The Rabbi's portrait appears on the obverse and his Synagogue at Kovno on the reverse.



He corresponded with the leading rabbis of western Europe, and was the anonymous friend who induced Samson Raphael Hirsch to write "Ueber die Beziehung des Talmuds zum Judenthum." In his later years he was revered by the Jews of Russia and his death in 1896 caused mourning in Orthodox communities throughout the world.



CLUB BULLETIN

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Volume XXIV No. 6 November-December 2003

INS/ICC of LOS ANGELES – The August meeting was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances but a nice group gathered for the September meeting. Following dinner, those in attendance discussed current happenings in the hobby and around the world. For the actual program portion of the evening, each person discussed some of their other hobbies, other than numismatics and what a wide variety it turned out to be. INS/ICC of LA meets the third Thursday of the month beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Factor's Deli in Beverly Hills. Those coming early enjoy a great dinner prior to the meeting.


INS OF MICHIGAN – This group did not hold any meetings during the summer months. Prior to summer break, the last couple of meetings have been combined with the Oak Park Stamp Club. Those interested in attending these meetings may contact the INSM at P.O. Box 942, Royal Oak, MI 48068.

Do what you can to help your club survive by not only being there in person, but why not bring an exhibit and give a short presentation. We all enjoy listening to something different. Remember, it takes everyone doing their part.

INS OF NEW YORK – This group also did not hold any meetings during the summer months. INSNY meets the 4th Wednesday of the month beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the offices of Dr. Jay Galst, 30 60th Street, 8th floor, NYC (there is ample parking on the street after 7:00 p.m.). Those gathering early can enjoy dinner at the Cinema Café direct across the street.

BUY / SELL / TRADE – If you are looking for an item to fill in the hole of your collection, this may be the place to ask for it. Or maybe you are thinking of selling something; this might be just the place to do it. Even though there were no inquiries one way or the other this time, I do know that most of those who have participated have had a good and complete conclusion. If interested, just let me know either by email or by regular mail at the address on the previous page.

DO YOU REMEMBER: When after spending all day at a convention attending meetings and buying things, that you would sit up half the night either in the hotel restaurant/bar or lobby just talking with old friends and/or making new ones? I certainly do....When you were trying to figure out how you would carry on the plane home all of your "special buys"

COMMENTS FROM DJS: We have been saddened to lose another dear numismatic friend, Murray Singer. Murray was one of those that was always there, always lending a hand, & had the gift of having enormous numismatic knowledge. He will be greatly missed.....Be well, be happy. 

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21563380	Silver/925 Proof	NIS 2 "מ" (Mem)		38.7mm	28.8g	2,500
21563300	Silver/925 Proof-like	NIS 1 Star of David		30mm	14.4g	2,500
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